

DO

FR-4915-01-P

SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD

[Docket No. AB 1252X]

Eastern Idaho Railroad, L.L.C.—Abandonment Exemption—in Fremont County, Idaho

Eastern Idaho Railroad, L.L.C. (EIRR) has filed a verified notice of exemption under 49 C.F.R. pt. 1152 subpart F—Exempt Abandonments to abandon a five-mile rail line located between milepost 28.80 at Egin and milepost 33.80 at Parker, in Fremont County, Idaho (the Line).¹ The Line traverses U.S. Postal Service ZIP Codes 83445 and 83438.

EIRR has certified that: (1) no local freight traffic has moved over the Line for at least two years; (2) the Line is stub-ended and not capable of handling overhead traffic; (3) no formal complaint filed by a user of rail service on the Line (or a state or local government entity acting on behalf of such user) regarding cessation of service over the Line either is pending with the Surface Transportation Board or any U.S. District Court or has been decided in favor of a complainant within the two-year period; and (4) the requirements at 49 C.F.R. §§ 1105.7 and 1105.8 (environmental and historic report), 49 C.F.R. § 1105.12 (newspaper publication), and 49 C.F.R. § 1152.50(d)(1) (notice to governmental agencies) have been met.

¹ Publication of this notice was delayed due to the partial shutdown of the Federal government from December 22, 2018, through January 25, 2019. See 49 C.F.R. § 1152.50(d)(3).

As a condition to this exemption, any employee adversely affected by the abandonment shall be protected under Oregon Short Line Railroad—Abandonment—Goshen, 360 I.C.C. 91 (1979). To address whether this condition adequately protects affected employees, a petition for partial revocation under 49 U.S.C. § 10502(d) must be filed.

Provided no formal expression of intent to file an offer of financial assistance (OFA) has been received,² this exemption will be effective on March 12, 2019, unless stayed pending reconsideration. Petitions to stay that do not involve environmental issues,³ formal expressions of intent to file an OFA under 49 C.F.R. § 1152.27(c)(2),⁴ and interim trail use/rail banking requests under 49 C.F.R. § 1152.29 must be filed by February 15, 2019. Petitions to reopen or requests for public use conditions under 49 C.F.R. § 1152.28 must be filed by February 28, 2019, with the Surface Transportation Board, 395 E Street, S.W., Washington, DC 20423-0001.

² The Board modified its OFA procedures effective July 29, 2017. Among other things, the OFA process now requires potential offerors, in their formal expression of intent, to make a preliminary financial responsibility showing based on a calculation using information contained in the carrier's filing and publicly available information. See Offers of Financial Assistance, EP 729 (STB served June 29, 2017); 82 Fed. Reg. 30,997 (July 5, 2017).

³ The Board will grant a stay if an informed decision on environmental issues (whether raised by a party or by the Board's Office of Environmental Analysis (OEA) in its independent investigation) cannot be made before the exemption's effective date. See Exemption of Out-of-Serv. Rail Lines, 5 I.C.C.2d 377 (1989). Any request for a stay should be filed as soon as possible so that the Board may take appropriate action before the exemption's effective date.

⁴ Each OFA must be accompanied by the filing fee, which currently is set at \$1,800. See 49 C.F.R. § 1002.2(f)(25).

A copy of any petition filed with the Board should be sent to EIRR's representative, Karl Morell, Karl Morell and Associates, 440 1st Street, N.W., Suite 440, Washington, DC 20001.

If the verified notice contains false or misleading information, the exemption is void ab initio.

EIRR has filed a combined environmental and historic report that addresses the effects, if any, of the abandonment on the environment and historic resources. OEA will issue an environmental assessment (EA) by February 15, 2019. Interested persons may obtain a copy of the EA by writing to OEA, Surface Transportation Board, Washington, DC 20423-0001) or by calling OEA at (202) 245-0305. Assistance for the hearing impaired is available through the Federal Information Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Comments on environmental and historic preservation matters must be filed within 15 days after the EA becomes available to the public.

Environmental, historic preservation, public use, or trail use/rail banking conditions will be imposed, where appropriate, in a subsequent decision.

Pursuant to the provisions of 49 C.F.R. § 1152.29(e)(2), EIRR shall file a notice of consummation with the Board to signify that it has exercised the authority granted and fully abandoned the Line. If consummation has not been effected by EIRR's filing of a notice of consummation by February 8, 2020, and there are no legal or regulatory barriers to consummation, the authority to abandon will automatically expire.

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Board decisions and notices are available at www.stb.gov.

Decided: February 5, 2019.

By the Board, Allison C. Davis, Acting Director, Office of Proceedings.